



ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

News Release

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MEDIA CONTACT:

Nicole Hall, Supervising Public Information Officer,
Phone: (858) 492-5009 | Cell: (858) 518-7774

**SCHOOL CHILDREN LEARN “GREEN” LESSONS FOR LIFE
AT CITY’S ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES HEADQUARTERS**

SAN DIEGO, CA— More than 500 City of San Diego children from five elementary schools will learn to care for the environment during the sixth annual “EnviroSchool” hosted by the City’s Environmental Services Department (ESD). The hands-on interactive workshop will be held March 24-28, 2003 at the City’s Ridgehaven “Green” Building Demonstration Project, located at 9601 Ridgehaven Court in Kearny Mesa.

“EnviroSchool gives children an opportunity to discover the wonders of the environment through exploratory lessons,” said Richard L. Hays, director of Environmental Services Department. “Environmental lessons are many times not offered in school curriculum and we wanted to offer information that otherwise children may not have access to. At ESD we promote our recycling and environmental programs everyday primarily to adults but the reality is we’re only doing half our job if we don’t reach children and help shape their understanding of the environment.”

Each day from 9 a.m. to noon, approximately 100 fourth- and fifth-grade students attend EnviroSchool. Each student has the opportunity to participate in the following three structured learning activities:

--**The Splash Van:** A mobile science lab featuring five different stations where kids use computers, microscopes, chemistry experiments and living creatures to learn about water quality and insect life. The lab teaches students the connection between human activities and the health of the environment.

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--**The Green Machine:** An interactive exploration program that teaches agricultural awareness at three stations: a soils research station (with live earthworms), the water cycle station (with dramatic role-playing scenarios and costumes), and integrated pest management station (with interactive role play and insect puppets). Both the Green Machine and the Splash Van are operated by the San Diego County Office of Education.

--**Waste Reduction & Recycling Presentation and the Recycling Relay:** A hands-on presentation with displays of items made with recycled materials that teaches students the importance of waste prevention, reducing, reusing, composting, and recycling followed by a high-energy recycling race where the environment is the winner.

“We designed the lessons to be hands-on and interactive because we believe children learn best through experience,” said Hays. “We also think education should be fun and our department mascot “Can Man” helps add that spark by encouraging the kids to learn about recycling and offering our Trashbuster Badges as rewards for learning.”

The week-long program will include the following public and private schools:

Monday March 24	Tuesday March 25	Wednesday March 26	Thursday March 27	Friday March 28
St. Michael Academy	San Diego Jewish Academy	Chesterton Elementary	Nestor Elementary	Our Lady of the Sacred Heart School

Since 1998, ESD has hosted EnviroSchool programs at the Ridgehaven “Green Building,” one of the City’s most energy-efficient facilities. At the close of this year’s EnviroSchool, approximately 3,000 school children of all ages will have completed the program’s educational lessons.

The City of San Diego’s Environmental Services Department is charged with refuse collection and disposal, recycling and environmentally-sound landfill management to meet the City’s long-term disposal needs. The Department also oversees the City’s management of energy use and explores innovative options for energy independence. For more information about the City’s EnviroSchool Program, please call the Environmental Services Department at (858) 694-7000 or visit the website at <http://www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services/>.

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